

Pierre Molinier
Angélique Aubrit & Ludovic Beillard

Sui Generis

Opening

Friday, 24.04.2026, 7 pm, KUNSTHALLE GIESSEN

Duration

24.04. – 12.07.2026

Curated by

Nadia Ismail, Christophe Gaillard, Camille Gouget



Fig.: Pierre Molinier, *La poupée*, 1956-57. Copyright the artist, Courtesy of Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris (left).
Angélique Aubrit & Ludovic Beillard, *Une solitude vraiment terrible (Clod)*, 2025. Courtesy of the artists und Galerie Wouters, Brussels (right).

Press view

Wednesday, 22.04.2026, 11 am

Sui generis – to form a class by oneself

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the death of Pierre Molinier (1900–1976), KUNSTHALLE GIESSEN presents an exhibition dedicated to the French artist, recontextualizing his provocative, erotic photographs and photomontages. Central to the exhibition is his intense engagement with identity, self-staging, and the creation of an ideal(ized) self. Through photographs, archival material, and personal objects from Molinier's studio apartment, the exhibition offers a comprehensive insight into his life and work.

At KUNSTHALLE GIESSEN, Molinier's work enters into a contemporary dialogue for the first time with that of Angélique Aubrit and Ludovic Beillard, who have collaborated as an artist duo since 2021. In their practice, they combine installation, video, and performance into immersive environments populated by grotesque figures. Within these burlesque, often absurd scenarios, theatre, sculpture, and film intertwine to form dense narrative spaces. Hand-sewn costumes, wooden sculptures, and recycled furniture constitute the material foundation of their work. Aubrit and Beillard develop hybrid characters inspired by Commedia dell'arte, grotesque cinema, and philosophical figures of thought. These creatures reflect social marginality, psychological states, and collective uncertainties.

At the core of Molinier's practice lies obsessive self-staging and corporeal self-inquiry: he uses his own body as material, continuously reshaping and reconfiguring it through photographic techniques such as montage, fragmentation, and multiplication. In doing so, he creates both hybrid image-bodies and a self-fashioned species that oscillate between male and female, human and artificial creation, deliberately subverting conventional notions of identity and gender. His works are marked by a striking aesthetic of repetition and detail, particularly in the staging of fetishistic elements such as legs, stockings, and accessories, which simultaneously emphasize and dissolve the body.

Molinier staged his erotically charged photographs in his Bordeaux studio apartment, which functioned as a theatrical setting and a constant backdrop in many of his images. A baroque wallpaper, an equally opulent folding screen, and an upholstered chair repeatedly appear as props, pointing to the boudoir-like atmosphere with which Molinier surrounded himself. His apartment—at once stage and studio—was filled with wigs, masks, costumes, phallic props, and mannequins that recur throughout his photographs. At the Kunsthalle, Molinier's works are presented within a setting that evokes the integral creative environment of his studio

without fully reconstructing it. The exhibition architecture, reminiscent of a floor plan, finds its counterpart in the walkable apartment developed specifically for the Kunsthalle by Angélique Aubrit and Ludovic Beillard.

Since 2024, Aubrit and Beillard have focused on the project *une solitude vraiment terrible* (2024–2027). Building on their characteristic approach of staging intimate situations with wooden and fabric figures in self-made settings, they are developing a multi-chapter film imagining the collapse of the capitalist system. Set against a dystopian backdrop marked by infrastructural and governmental breakdown, existing power structures and social norms begin to unravel. Their characters are confronted with situations charged with social tension. Each chapter of *une solitude vraiment terrible* responds directly to a specific site of production, such as exhibitions or residencies of the artists. In *Sui Generis*, Aubrit and Beillard present *Le moineau* (The sparrow), depicting the life of two sisters who chose to live together to protect themselves by limiting contacts with the outside world and by inventing a parallel life inside their apartment. This new chapter of the project resonates both with the life and work of Pierre Molinier and with the Kunsthalle as an exhibition site. The apartment created for the Kunsthalle, therefore, equally belongs to the pair of sisters and to Molinier, serving both as a set and a site of experimentation.

Aubrit and Beillard's often uncanny figures, with wooden heads, hands, and feet, are brought to life in a site-specific performance by the artists and non-professional performers. The documentation of this performance remains in the exhibition space as a filmic and sound installation, alongside the inanimate puppets. As in the evocation of Molinier's apartment, a theatrical setting emerges as a referential space. Aubrit and Beillard's figures further resonate with Molinier's obsessive visual world and his conception of the body as a malleable, transformable material. Like Molinier's constructed alter egos, they are doubles that function as projection surfaces for viewers. Both positions share an impulse to imagine hybrid beings beyond stable identities—as an attempt to conceive another species, another self.

Pierre Molinier (1900, Agen – 1976, Bordeaux, France) was a French painter, photographer, and performer, best known for his radically transgressive work within the context of Surrealism. Trained as a decorative painter, Molinier initially worked in Bordeaux producing figurative landscapes and portraits before gradually departing from traditional visual languages from the 1940s onward. After the Second World War, he turned to esoteric and later explicitly erotic and performative practices. His work revolves around themes such as androgyny, fetishism, self-staging, desire, death, and the dissolution of stable identities. From the 1950s onward, Molinier developed a distinctive visual language combining painting, photography, and photomontage, often using himself as a model and deliberately subverting gender roles. In 1955, André Breton became aware of his work and integrated Molinier into the Surrealist circle. Despite—or precisely because of—numerous scandals, his work remained largely overlooked for a long time. He lived and worked in Bordeaux until his suicide in 1976. The artist is represented by Galerie Christoph Gaillard in Paris.

Angélique Aubrit (*1988, Angoulême) lives and works in Brussels. **Ludovic Beillard** (*1982, Bordeaux) lives and works in Bordeaux. Both initially studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Bordeaux, followed by the École de Recherche Graphique in Brussels. Since 2021, they have worked together as an artist duo. Their work has been presented in numerous solo exhibitions, including Galerie Valeria Cetraro, Paris (2025), Kunstverein Bielefeld (2023), La Centrale, Brussels (2023), Centre d'art La Tôlerie, Clermont-Ferrand (2021), CAC – Centre d'art La Synagogue, Delme (2021), Établissement d'en face, Brussels (2021), and Komplot, Brussels (2019).

They have also participated in numerous international group exhibitions, including at Casino du Luxembourg (2025), steirischer herbst (2025), Haus Mödrath, Kerpen (2024), Clages Gallery, Cologne (2023), K21 Düsseldorf (2023), Centre Pompidou-Metz (2022), CRAC – Le 19, Montbéliard (2022), CAPC Bordeaux (2021), and FUTURA, Prague (2020). In 2022, the duo received the Prix Médiatime in Brussels. Recent residencies include Triangle – Astérides, Marseille (2023), Centre d'art Les Capucins, Embrun (2022/23), and Centre Pompidou-Metz (2022). Since 2023, their work has been part of the collection of the Centre National des Arts Plastiques (CNAP), Paris. They are represented by Galerie Valeria Cetraro, Paris, and Wouters, Brussels.



With special thanks to
Christophe Gaillard Gallery, Paris
Wouters Gallery, Brussels
Morgenstern & Wildegans

Visitor information

All information about the opening, our accompanying program with event dates and access information online at:

www.kunsthalle-giessen.de |
www.giessen.de

Fig.: Pierre Molinier, *Autoportrait au loup*, Copyright the artist,
Courtesy of Galerie Christophe Gaillard, Paris.

Accompanying programme

Guided tour by the curator Nadia Ismail

Sun. 31.05.2026, 3 pm

Art Buzz – short tours & drinks for young culture fans

Thu. 28.05.2026. 6–8 pm

Art and coffee

Wed. 03.06.2026, 2 pm

Registration until 01.06.2026

kunsthalle@giessen.de, +49 641 306 1041

Participation fee 2,50 €

Art education in individual conversation

every Sat. 2–4 pm

Sunday guided tour

Sun. 3 pm

26.04. + 14.06. + 05.07.2026



Fig.: Angélique Aubrit & Ludovic Beillard, *une solitude vraiment terrible*, installation view, 2024, MeetFactory, Prague, Czech Republic. Courtesy of the artists and Galerie Wouters, Brussels